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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2016
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [LE](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY CONTINUES DELIBERATIONS OVER A UNIFIL
CONTRIBUTION

REF: A. STATE 137424

[1](#)B. ANKARA 4860

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Per reftel request, Ambassador met with MFA Deputy U/S Uzumcu on August 22 to urge Turkey to make a substantial contribution to a robust UNIFIL. Uzumcu said Turkey is taking steps to formalize its offer of ports and is willing to contribute to DPKO staff for Lebanon planning. The Turkish General Staff is considering training LAF and the government is still evaluating a possible contribution of humanitarian troops. The National Security Council discussed support for Lebanon but came to no decision. Internal deliberations will continue following FM Gul's return from today's visit to Syria. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador underscored US appreciation for Turkey's offer of the Mersin sea port and Adana Airport to support a robust UNIFIL deployment and Turkey's potential contribution of a humanitarian battalion, and emphasized the US interest in a strong Turkish presence in the PKO. He noted the August 23 EU meeting to discuss a possible leadership role in and troop contribution for a robust UNIFIL presence and said any information about a larger GOT contribution that could be shared with France, Italy and other EU members in advance of that meeting would be helpful to the EU deliberations. He discounted the possibility of a second UN resolution on UNIFIL. The Ambassador encouraged the GOT to actively promote the offer of its sea and airport to potential troop contributors and welcomed any ideas that Turkey could share on possible US use of those ports or Incirlik Air Base in support of the effort in Lebanon.

[1](#)3. (C) Uzumcu acknowledged EU interest in a significant Turkish presence in UNIFIL, noting contacts between FM Gul and PM Erdogan with Chirac, Merkel, Prodi and others. Chirac, Uzumcu said, insisted that a Turkish contribution to UNIFIL will be key to convincing other Muslim countries to participate. He said that Turkey has taken steps to fulfill the offers already on the table. An MFA official deployed to

New York on August 20 for consideration as a UN DPKO staff member to support the Lebanon planning effort. The GOT has decided that parliamentary approval is not required to open its ports to support the UN mission and will submit to the Council of Ministers within several days a request for approval to offer up the Mersin seaport and Adana Airport for UNIFIL deployment. He expects a positive decision within ten days. The Turkish General Staff is evaluating the possibility of training Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) either in Turkey or in Lebanon.

14. (C) The National Security Council (NSC) discussed Lebanon during its regularly-scheduled August 21 meeting but came to no decision, according to Uzumcu. An NSC press statement issued following the meeting called for full implementation of UNSCR 1701 and increased efforts to establish peace and stability in the broader region, but gave no indication of a decision on a troop contribution to UNIFIL. Following FM Gul's return from a one-day trip to Syria today (ref b), the government will continue its internal deliberations, said Uzumcu. The GOT is weighing the possibility of a visit to Tehran to discuss Lebanon as well but no date has been set.

15. (C) Uzumcu observed that the last draft of the UNIFIL ConOps and Rules of Engagement were strengthened with respect to the use of force, taking the robust UNIFIL closer to a Chapter 7 mission. He added, however that Turkey has not suggested any changes.

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